

THE APPROBATION
from the Chief Physician
of the KING.

WE have viewed the History of a Child, who remained Twenty five Years in his Mothers Belly : Collected by Monsieur De Blegny, and have found nothing therein, which may hinder the Printing of the same.

At St. Germain en Laye,
the 6th. February
1679.

Signed,
D'ACQUIN.

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A TRUE
HISTORY
OF

A CHILD Anatomized:

Which remained Twenty five years
in his Mothers Belly.

With all those Reflections
which the *Phænomena* of the
same may Explain.

Very Serviceable and Useful for All:
E S P E C I A L L Y

*Physicians, Chirurgeons,
and Midwives.*

B Y

NICHOLAS DE BLEGNT
Chirurgeon to the King in *France*,
and one of the most Reputed in *Paris*.

*Translated according to the Approved and
Priviledged Copy of Paris.*

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which is a tale of
in the history of
the world.



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OF THE
TREASURY
OF THE
REVENUE
OF THE
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1844

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A 3

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of the Stationers
Hall at *Paris* ; the
25th February 1679.

7 AP 66
Was Signed

E. Cocoterott,
Warden.

A



Fig 2



Fig. 1



Fig 3



Fig 2



A T R U E
H I S T O R Y

O F
A Child Anatomized :
Which remained Twenty five
Years in his Mothers Belly.

M Argaret Mathews, the
Wife of John Pughet,
Clothworker at Tld-
Louse, after having happily
brought forth into the
World Ten Children in the
latter part of the year 1652,
found her self with child of
the Eleventh ; and at the

expiration of the Accustomary Time , she felt the Pangs of Travel ; the vehemency of which forced her to betake her self to Bed : A Chirurgeon who was accustomed to Deliver Women , was fetched ; who having visited her , told her and assured her , that there was no disposition or likelihood of being Delivered at that time : Nevertheless the Pains continued and increased , and cruelly tormented her for the space of Two Months : In the meantime two of the most Renowned Doctors there, were advised
with

with it ; who opening and prescribing Medicines, and acting what might be possibly done, could produce no other Effects, then some Clodders of Blood, forced out of the Matrix.

After this first time, she went near hand Three Months more with these troublesome, yet now more tollerable Pains, than the former, though notwithstanding they were still accompanied with a continual evacuation of a filthy, mattery Stuff. From that time she increased in her strength, and nothing more did

did come forth from the Matrix; but she was, if she would enjoy any ease, constrained continually to lie upon her Back; for when she turned herself any otherwise, her Burden caused her great Pains: In so much that she could, as it were, feel the Child remove it self. She continued in this condition Eighteen or Nineteen years, during which time, after the intermission of some Moneths, she under-went such strong and extraordinary Pains, that oftentimes she earnestly intreats the Chirurgeon to open her Belly, and
so

so take away that which was the Cause of her so great and miserable Pains.

Since the aforesaid first years, unto the year 1675, that same Burthen (which by its weight and greatness had so long tormented her) grew more tolerable and less troublesome; being then grown fast and without any Motion.

Finally, The Seventeenth of June 1675, she was taken with a Fever, which ended the Two and fixtieth year of her Age and her Misery together. Next day the Body being opened, there was found

6 *A True History of*

found on the whole Bottom
of the Matrix , a Body or
Substance as hard as Stone;
each side of this Substance,
towards the Bottom, being
hollow about the length of
four Fingers , covering an
Ulcer, Boil, or Sore of the
same bigness ; as may be
seen by Figure 1 : Excepting
the Sore, the rest of the Ma-
trix was in its natural Form;
as also all the lower parts of
the Belly , the Cawl only
excepted; which had acqui-
red about the thickness of
two Fingers breadth a hard-
ness and a little fleshiness:
These things considered, the
Cawl

Cawl was laid upon the dead Corps, and then was espied a Deformed Lump, fast under the Cawl, which being seperated, represented the Figure N. 2: The out-side of it was nothing but a Crust, a large inch thick, and in some places more; this Crust was near as hard as a Gristle, of Colour a pale Yellow, excepting on that side of its joyning to the Cawl; where it was harder and something redder. Some Persons out of Curiosity, laid the same against the Fire, being of opinion that it would melt like Suet or Tallow;

Tallow ; and so after the melting there would remain a kind of a Film or Skin, with some Knobs , which appeared in divers places of the said substance : In the mean time, in this turning it about , there were seen some Signs of a Child, which was loosened and cut from it as dexterously as possibly ; and at length a Child was discovered, and discerned to be a Man Child ; the Yard being found between the Film or Skin of the Groin : It was laid with its Head to the bottom of the Matrix , his right Hand in
the

the form of a Closed Fist, placed against the upper part of the Crown of his Head; his Breast against the Backbone of the Mother; his Back was on the side of the Cawl; the Feet were bowed upwards, so that they in part incompassed the Circumference of the Navel, as also some part of the left side of the neather part of the Belly: Some Hair was found upon the Eye-lids, the Eyes sunk in, the Film of the same wrinkled, the Nose flattish, the Lips grown over with a Substance harder than that wherewith he had been incompassed;

compassed ; and after the Gums were cut , there was there-under found Teeth near as great as of a full-grown Child ; under its right Arm , and by the right Ear , a small Lock , of yellow but very short Hair : The Nails of the Hands and Feet long , hard and raw the Flesh of the Neck , Groin , and the parts thereabouts , coloured with Blood ; the Skull Bones separated from one another , and the Brains sunk down , and almost of the Colour of Conserve of Roses ; the inward parts of the Breast and Belly were dried up and blackish

blackish ; the Muscles and
Sinews of the lower parts
had lost very little of their
greatness , or of their natu-
ral force , otherwise then
that the fleshy parts were
White, Yellow, and a Dark
Pale ; the Knees a little part-
ed from one another ; the
left Foot a little bended ,
hiding the right Foot under
it ; the left Hand shut and
pressed against the Chin and
Knee of the same Side : Fi-
nally , All the Limbs, except-
ing the right Arm , were
placed as they are in other
Children in the Mothers
Womb ; which may ea-
sily

fily be discerned by the third Figure.

After it was stretched out, it was Fourteen Inches long, although the Back-bone remained bent; being inwardly bowed towards the right Side.

All these things were publicly known and viewed in the City of *Thoulouse*, and according to the Order of the Court of Parliament of the said City proved and verified; where also may be seen the Testation of several Credible Persons: Moreover, This Relation made
by

by me, is consonant and conform. Those Memorials to me sent from thence, and the Report I had from *John Francis Pughet*, Eldest Son and only Male, of the three Children of *Margaret Matthews*, who is yet alive, and brought us this Wonder to a Publick View: So that now it only remains to examine the Natural Causes of so many Extraordinary Accidents.

CON-

CONSIDERATIONS

UPON THE

Principal Circumstances

OF THIS

HISTORY.

NOT to digress too far from the Subject here mentioned, I shall not stand to inquire, What the Natural Causes and Motives of Child-bearing are; Possibly my Fortune may be, to meet with a Better Way, and more Consonant, to the Explication; I must then only

only propose that these Causes had determined, this our Child to come forth of the Womb ; being brought to its due time, and the Labour being very near, upon the ordinary manner: This then being established, the first Difficulty which doth present it self to be discussed, is, To know the Cause or Reason, Why the Inward Opening or Mouth of the Matrix; resisted the powerful Endeavours both of Mother and Child? That is, Why did not the Matrix sufficiently open it self for the passage; or at least for the drawing-away

way of this Child? It being certain, That as often as Women come in Travel, the Matrix always opens and enlarges its self; in whatever manner the Children appear; and all that *Margaret* had before this, doth sufficiently evidence, that this part in her was naturally well constituted. In the mean while it is not very troublesome, to resolve this Question, It is certain that a Part or Member may suffer and have an Indisposition at one time, which it never had or suffered before; and also that the Inward Opening of the Matrix

trix, is subject to Inflammations, Hardness, Convulsions, and in general, Diseases which are common to all fleshy and membranous parts; the which either hinders or spoils the actions of the said parts, and one of these two Accidents might occasion that Condition in which *Margaret* found her self, in time of her Labour. The whole City of *Thoulouse* being at that time amazed and afraid, by reason of an already begun Infection, and consider, That in Women the Matrix is made

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sensible of every strong and extraordinary Motion of the Mind.

But seeing the Inwardest Mouth of the Matrix could not be opened sufficiently, could not the Child remain in the Matrix, as others have before done, somewhat after the due time? And how could it come out of the Matrix, and cast its self into the Vacuity of the Belly? This is another Subject to be wondered at, and yet may have Natural Causes: It's probable this Child pitched first
with

with his Head downwards, it being found in this posture; the Water could not on this side form or bring it self to any Head Meeting with uncomparable resistance: In the mean time the Pangs of Travel were extream hard; and it is certain the harder they are, the more that moisture which incompasseth the Child, is moved and put forth the Adherent Membranes in the form of a Point, to force its self a Passage; which is called a Formed, or Full-grown Water: We may then already judge,

that the Moisture, with every Pang, prest towards the Inward Mouth of the Matrix; and it is not difficult to be believed, That the Water, as it were by a rebound, turned to the contrary Parts, and so brought forth the same Effect; *Margaret* having during that time laid in several Forms and Manners, and that probably, some manner or other, the height of this Opening might be equal with that of the Matrix: Forasmuch as the Chirurgeons who are accustomed to Deliver

liver Women, and also the Midwives daily observe, To lift up the hinder parts of those who are in Travel upon the Bed, to facilitate the passage of the Child.

But it may be said notwithstanding all this, That the Water doth not receive such a Form as I have described, before it is forward and in the Innermost Mouth of the Matrix; and that therefore, to form it self on the other side, it must of necessity meet with the Circumference of some

B 3 Space;

Space ; that is to say , the separating or parting of the whole : For *Margaret* had no Ulceration in the Bottom of her Matrix ; not having had extraordinary pains before her Labour ; and the divers Refluctions of the Water , nor the Members of the Child , could make a sufficient Wound to give him a Passage ; the whole Space or Vacancy of that Bottom is naturally covered with the After-birth : And if in case it had been sufficiently separated or parted , then *Margaret* must have continually

tinually during her Labour,
evacuated Blood ; which
here was not so : But the
situation of the Trunks or
Pipes of the Matrix (al-
though they are in a man-
ner annexed to the Bottom
thereof) teacheth us , that
their Mouths could not
well be covered by the
After-birth , which occupi-
eth but the Middle ; and
Experience learneth that
they canretch considera-
bly ; for sometimes Chil-
dren are generated in them ;
which have been known to
live and grow there until
the Fourth or Fifth Month ;

B 4

But

But if any will object, That the Quantity of Mans Seed necessary for Generation, can insinuate it self; without having the Entrances to be naturally very wide, or capable of retching of it self in the Copulation: I answer, That this, nor all the Reasons that may be alledged, are capable to with-stand Experience: The History I am about rehearsing, doth undeniably prove that the aforesaid Mouths can very well endure as large a stretching as the Inwardest Mouth of the Matrix.

This

This 30th of *April* 1676,
I was sent for by the much
Renowned Midwife Mrs.
Langlois, to deliver a cer-
tain Woman, the Wife of
a maimed Souldier, whose
Name was *Bourguignon*, li-
ving in the *Back-street*;
and when I came, I found
the Head of the Child far
advanced in its passage;
but the Pains ceasing for
Twenty four hours toge-
ther, and the Signs of her
otherwise approaching
Death, shew'd us the ne-
cessity of Drawing out
the Child; which happen-

ed with Success , as afterwards the After-birth , according to the ordinary Course ; but yet she felt some Pains , when feeling about the Circuit of her Navel , a little to the side of the Liver , I found a moving Hardness , much like a Childs Head ; which I also demonstrated to the Midwife ; whereby we judged the Woman was not wholly delivered : so I put my Hand again into the Womb , and diligently searching the whole Concavity of the Matrix , I felt the Entrance of the
right

right a little opened, into which I presently got my Fore-finger, afterwards another, and then my whole Hand; with which I took out of the same more than two pounds of Congealed, and in some measure hardened Blood; and then the aforesaid round Hardness was no more felt.

This Experience then affirmeth, That the Entrance of this Trunk or Pipe of the Matrix, can suffer a great stretch. But here are two difficulties yet remaining to be resolved; The first is,
That

That if this part had been open in that moment when our Child passed, then it would not have occasioned the Ulceration which was found in the Matrix. The Second is, That this Ulceration covered the whole Circumference of the bottom of this part, and that the Entrance of which we have already spoke) is in the side of the said Bottom.

The Solution of these two Points is easie, The Chyrurgeons who are used to Deliver Women, and the

the Midwives , know, That in all Common and Natural Deliveries , the Children alwayes come forth, before that the Circumference of the Inward Opening of the Matrix be as big as their Head , and that the same passage doth inlarge it self at the same time they pass through it. It may then be , that our Child sticking fast in the Pipe or Trunk (of the which I have already spoken) before the impressing of the Water , caused a greater Opening ; and that so in its passage made a par-

partition in the whole; which possibly gave the first occasion of the Ulceration, whereof we have treated; and that this Separation, most likely, was made upon the side (before the After-birth was joyned fast to the Matrix) rather then any where else, by reason that is always moist; and therefore it followeth by reason, to be more casie in this place then any other.

I will not make any demur in Explaining the Generation of that Stony Body

dy or Substance found in the bottom of the Matrix, it is evident by Experience, that in the Ulcers which are not well Cleaned and Purified, the Matter and Filth which remaineth upon the Sides, from time to time, produceth by succession a strong hardness; but every one might doubt how the Legs of our Infant (which in all probability were first born) should have placed themselves in such order, that they followed the motion of the Water; and so at the same time are come in-
to

to the Trunks or Pipes, seeing they are not Naturally Crooked, and mollified in the Matrix: Moreover, That under the divers Motions of this Child, it was so, as by chance, placed in order; the Knees which ordinarily are close joyned together, may be first passed thorow; so that the Legs lying close about the Buttocks, could not possibly stop the rest of the Body; However it is, it is apparent, the Head came last; because it rested against the bottom of the Matrix, and the Disposition

on in which the right Arm was found, doth declare, that it served for a form, to hinder the Head from being stopped in its Passage; which according to many Authors is a very necessary Circumstance in those Deliveries where the Children come forth with their Feet first. See here then the Passage of this Child out of the Matrix sufficiently explained, so that what happened thereafter is now to be examined; Concerning the Time it stayed in its Mothers Body, and principally how it

it was Conserved there:

Therefore , First , We must take this for certain, That the Bodies of Creatures are preserved from Corruption, either by Nourishment which maintaineth Life , or by some certain Effect which hinders the Dissolution after Death.

And it may well be that both these Causes did Concur in Conservation of our Child; for there is nothing to hinder our believing , That for some time it continued , receiving the Blood
tho-

thorow the Vessels of the Navel for its Nourishment, seeing we experience every day that in some Womens Labours the After-birth sticks fast to the Matrix, so that they are forced to seperate it with Fingers; and sometimes pull it out by Piece-meals: This is an Observation that cannot truly be alledged against, If this Lump can remain fast annexed to the Matrix after the Child is brought forth into the World, then it is clear enough, that it was so in the Case of *Margaret*, because her Child

con-

continued enjoying its first Nourishment ; for the outward Air could not touch the String , and therefore cause no hindrance in the motion of the Blood , wherewith it was full ; and it is undoubtable , that the Child was preserved some time by this means ; by reason *Margaret* voided no Blood at that time when the Child passed thorow the Matrix into the Concavity of the Belly ; but to the contrary , some Weeks after , when she was given Opening and Forcing Medicines , she voided some

some Lumps or Clodders of Blood, which most apparently caused some partition in some part of the After-birth. By that which already hath been said, we may suggest that our Child might be nourished about Two Months, without the Matrix, in the same manner as when he was in the same: And it is to be comprehended that, that same wherewith it was covered, was that which preserved it from Corruption after its Death; sheltering it from the piercing Air, Moistures, and other Beginnings of Cor-

Corruption. Here also may arise a Doubt whether it ceased to live by reason of the want of that motion of the Blood, which it drew to him by the String, or that it continued receiving Nourishment some other way; but as the Conclusions upon this Doubt are very dubious, I shall content my self to shew the Reasons, upon these two Circumstances, and leave the Reader to side with which he pleaseth. And first, forasmuch as concerneth the Generation of the Crust, it is not certain that

that it had sufficient thickness to nourish our Child before the After-birth was separated. But we may say that therein was no impossibility, because the Water flowing forth in her Labour, and the After-birth remaining in the Matrix, that which was found fleshy in the Crust, could be no other thing then the Trunk or Pipe, in the which our Child had placed it self. And this place or part was thick enough to withstand the Breathings which issued from the Child as it expired.

red. And although many Witnesses have asserted, That our Child did naturally stir until the Eighteenth year, they must confess that it was no otherwise then as *Margaret* turned her self from one side to the other; which doth evidence, that it was nothing but that motion; the which might be seen in the *Molæ*.

But it may be said, and very truly, that *Margaret* every Nine Months felt almost Travel Pangs; but that doth not prove, that these

these Pains were the Effect of those Endeavours which the Child did to be brought forth. It is found out to be no otherwise caused than by the moisture cast up by the Mother; and that was sufficient to moisten these parts at all times: So that the Child might fall to the bottom of the Matrix, and so cause the Pains.

Finally, It must be consented, That the Child could not live without sustenance from the Navel Strings: First, Because the same being annexed unto
C the

the After-birth, could receive no Nourishment otherwise then in the same manner as the *Molæ*. Secondly, The Skin and Flesh being tinctured with Blood; it is credible that their Vessels were anatomized with the Cawl. Thirdly, Being at that time a part and member of the Mother, needed no other Respiration then from its self. Fourthly, Being extream hard and great, it may be judged that it supplied the place of the After-birth.

But

But all these Circumstances have others, which contradict them: Our Child was not so perfectly fast to the Cawl as the *Mole* is to the Matrix; there being a thick Crust between them, the Anatomy was not perfectly observed by all that opened the Body of *Margaret*: The Child which doth not respire while it is in the Matrix, must of necessity transpire through the Heart Veins of the Mother; and it is evident that the Blood thorow these Vessels did not circum-ambulate in our

Child , because it did not waxe accordingly. And it is well enough known , That those Humours which have lost their Natural Motion , being gathered or congealed in any part of the Body, of necessity must generate an extraordinary motion , which either ripens them , or they stay in the same form ; which generates a hardness.

But howsoever it is , If our Child did live after the Ulceration of the After-birth , then the manner and case in which we found the Child , demonstrates that
the

the Child had been a long time dead, and that its preservation proceeded from nothing else but the Crust wherewith it was covered: I speak nothing of the bigness of the Nails, for it is known they grow after Death; and passing by all superfluous Circumstances, The first Consideration which may in this Case be made, is that the Imperial Cut is not to be despised, as some new Authors do affirm, seeing there may be false Conceptions, and Children themselves generated in the

Trunks or Pipes of the Matrix, as well as those conceived in the Matrix, can cast them out.

The Second Consideration, That if in due time this Operation had been used, the Child might have been pulled out, and *Margaret* not have suffered and under-gone so many pains, which she suffered so many years.

The Third is, That if the Matrix had been cut (which in this Case is most dangerous.) there ought to have been a certainty that the Child was in the Trunks
or

or Pipes of the Matrix.

Finally, The Fourth is, Then when after a certain being with-child, the Travel or Labour and Pains accordingly do come; yet then you shall find the Inward Opening closed and shut, and the Child either upon the right or left side, higher than before; with a Falling Motion, which then you may be assured, is in one of the Pipes of the Matrix, and then the Imperial Cut is very necessary.

F I N I S.